

COLIN'S STORY

January 2023



I have been homeless for a year and a half. Before this, I was living in a house with my wife. But I lost my job and then I got sick. So eventually, I lost my house. When I first became homeless, I was really scared. I didn't know where to go. Just like that, I was homeless. I slept outside that night. I haven't been able to find housing again since then.

But I am still a really lucky man. I am truly blessed. **It's all about perspective.** There are some bad things that have happened in my life, but there are a lot of things to be grateful for too. There are some really bad people in this world, but there are some really good ones too. Focusing on the good ones give me **hope.**

A lot of people have prejudice against homeless people. I would just say that those people need to have a better understanding of homelessness. Some people are just ignorant on the matter, and I don't mean that in a bad way. **They just need to understand us.**



We are humans too. It helps when someone walks by and gives us a smile. But people who hate homeless people... It doesn't help to kick someone when they are already down. It doesn't help you and it doesn't help us. When we're down, sometimes all we need is a hug.



**We are just trying to survive out here.
We have nowhere else to go.**

Not all of us are drug addicts or mentally ill. Some of us are just down on our luck. Even if someone is a drug addict or if they are mentally ill, it doesn't mean they don't deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. A lot of them are really nice people who just need an escape from their struggles.

Everyone is going through things. You can't assume that someone is okay just because they are well-dressed and have a smile on their face – especially for us men. It's hard for us to talk about our feelings. Just look at celebrities like Robin Williams or tWitch.

We're all humans and citizens of this world. We all just struggle with different things. **Homelessness can happen to anyone.** One minute you're living in a house with your wife and the next minute, you're sleeping outside on the streets. If it happened to me, it could happen to you.

Becoming homeless is a snowball effect. One thing leads to another. But I believe we also have the power to stop the snowball and get back up. **It's all about perspective.**

It's all about how you look at the situation. I count my blessings and I consider myself a really lucky man. I am truly blessed. I believe we are all here for a reason and that everything happens for a reason. I have a lot to be grateful for. **I'm here. I'm alive.**



Duke, my puppy, has helped me get through a lot of things. He has been with me this whole time. He is more than my best friend. I wouldn't be here today without him. He has taught me a lot about **unconditional love**. We humans put a lot of conditions on love. "I'll only love you if this or that." But dogs don't do that. They love you unconditionally. That's the way it should be.

I hope 2023 is a good year. I hope I'll find housing this year. And if I don't, I hope it's not a bad year at least.